

COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

TOM DAVIS, CHAIRMAN



MEDIA ADVISORY

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Government Reform Committee to Consider Program Assessment and Results Act, Nazi War Crimes Working Group Extension

What: Government Reform Committee Business Meeting

When: THURSDAY, MARCH 10, 2005, 10:00 A.M.

Where: ROOM 2154, RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

Background:

The Government Reform Committee will hold a business meeting to mark up the following legislation:

H.R. 185, the "Program Assessment and Results Act"

The Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) was enacted to focus increased attention on setting performance goals for federal programs and measuring programs' success in meeting such goals. While GPRA has had an impact on promoting performance and accountability in decisionmaking in executive agencies and on the Hill over the past decade, a 2004 GAO report found that although GPRA requires that agencies conduct program evaluations, this requirement is often overlooked. OMB's Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) was created to address this problem by integrating OMB into the program evaluation process with the intention of basing government-wide budget decisions on program performance.

H.R. 185, which was introduced by Rep. Todd Platts, chairman of the Subcommittee on Management, Finance, and Accountability and full committee Chairman Tom Davis on January 4, 2005, does not seek to codify the use of the PART specifically. Rather, it amends GPRA by establishing a requirement for program reviews (without specifying exactly how such reviews should be conducted). The legislation would require the Director of the Office of Management and Budget to:

- Review each federal program at least once every 5 fiscal years;
- Coordinate with the relevant agency in conducting reviews;
- In coordination with the relevant agency head, develop criteria for deciding which program activities to review each fiscal year, and to take into account the advantages of reviewing program activities with similar functions or purposes during the same fiscal year; and
- Submit the results of the reviews for a fiscal year to Congress in conjunction with the submission of the President's budget proposal.

H.R. 185 is virtually identical to the Government Reform Committee reported version of H.R. 3826 from the 108th Congress, which included a number of modifications to the original legislation in order to address concerns raised by the minority. Specifically, the legislation includes the following changes based on negotiations with the minority:

- A requirement for enhanced coordination between OMB and the relevant agency in determining the programs to review;
- Language to ensure the transparency of the programmatic review report provided to Congress by ensuring that this report specifies (1) the performance goals for each program review, (2) the criteria used to evaluate, (3) the results of the evaluation, and (4) is available in electronic form through the OMB website;
- A requirement that OMB establish a mechanism for public comment on the programs to be assessed in a given fiscal year; and
- Inclusion of provisions to ensure proper treatment of classified information.

S. 384, to Extend the Nazi War Crimes Working Group for Two Years

This legislation would amend the Japanese Imperial Government Disclosure Act of 2000 to extend from four to six years the existence of the Nazi War Crimes and Japanese Imperial Government Records Interagency Working Group. The Working Group is charged with locating and declassifying federal records dealing with Nazi and Japanese World War II war crimes. S. 384 was introduced by Senator DeWine and passed by the Senate on February 16, 2005 (companion legislation was introduced by Rep. Carolyn Maloney, also on February 16, 2005). The Working Group is slated to expire on March 31 of this year.

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